Restriction on outsourcing of call centres and IT Services

1248. SHRI RAMA MUNI REDDY SIRIGIREDDY: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the issue of putting restrictions on outsourcing of call centres and IT services has come up during the meeting between him and the US Trade Representative Mr. Robert Zoellick recently;

(b) if so, the details of the discussions took place between the two leaders on these issues;

(c) whether it does not amount contrary to the spirit of market access and cannot it be called technically, as restrictions on the movement of natural persons by USA; and

(d) if so, the reaction of USA in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) to (b) Yes, Sir. The issue regarding Bills for restricting outsourcing of Government contracts to outside of USA was raised in the meeting with United States Trade Representative (USTR) and India's concern was registered. USTR described these Bills as "bad policy".

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. The proposed Bills are against the spirit of market access. None of the Bills have so far been passed.

Growth centres in Uttaranchal

1249. SHRI HARISH RAWAT: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) the growth centres selected in Uttaranchal;

(b) whether Government are providing economic assistance for development of these growth centres;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether some new growth centres are proposed to be set up in the State; and

(e) if so, the locations thereof and by when these centres would be set up?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) to (c) One growth centre has been allotted for the State for Uttaranchal. The location selected for setting up the growth centre is Sigaddi, District Pauri. Central Government provides a central assistance to the tune of Rs. 1500 lakh for development of the Growth Centre.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise, Sir.

SEA Region as a Giant Free Trade Zone

1250. SHRI B.J. PANDA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Association of South East Asian Nations proposes to transform SEA region into a giant free trade zone by 2020;

(b) if so, the details of the project agreed to at the ASEAN meet at Bali, Indonesia; and

(c) how far this would help to boost the economy?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI SATYABRATA MOOKHERJEE): (a) In the Ninth ASEAN Summit that was held at Bali, Indonesia on 7th October, 2003, the ASEAN leaders underlined the importance of a higher degree of coherence of efforts to achieve the objectives of ASEAN Vision 2020 with those aimed at achieving the Millennium Development Goals, and with those in pursuit of their national development agenda. It was in the year 1997 that the ASEAN leaders adopted the ASEAN Vision 2020, which called for ASEAN Partnership in Dynamic Development aimed at forging closer economic integration within the region. The Vision statement also resolved to create a stable, prosperous and highly competitive ASEAN Economic Region in which there is a free flow of goods, services, investments, capital, and equitable economic development and reduced poverty and socio economic disparities.